

## Major scam hits govt's nutritional programme

**NEW DELHI:** A major scam in the Centre's national nutrition programme has been detected.

A whopping one crore "bogus beneficiaries" of the supplementary nutrition under the Center-sponsored scheme has been found out by the Women and Child Development Ministry.

It is mainly the seeding of the beneficiaries' Aadhaar number under the scheme which has brought such a large scale irregularity to the fore.

The Ministry had ordered for seeding of the unique identity of all beneficiaries of the scheme to create and maintain a centralised database of those benefited under the programme last year.

Under the national nutrition programme, supplementary nutrition is supplied to the pregnant and lactating women as well as malnourished children and adolescent girls across the country.

"With constant monitoring and follow up as well as the use

of Aadhaar and other identifiers, one crore bogus beneficiaries have been eliminated from the system so far," WCD Minister Maneka Gandhi told reporters here on Monday.

This means saving of "almost Rs 2000 crore" a year on supplementary nutrition cost, she added.

This is the second big scandal that has been unearthed due to seeding of the Aadhaar number of the beneficiaries.

The Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry recently said that seeding of Aadhaar led to the detection of as many as 80,000 fake teachers who were on the payroll of more than one higher educational institutions as their regular faculty members across the country in a gross violation of the university grants commission's (UGC) regulations.

The HRD Ministry is conducting a through probe into this large scale irregularity to identify those involved and take an action against them.

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